

Message Text

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E.O. 11652:N/A
SUBJECT: PROGRAM REVIEW: PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM MAGAZINE

REF: USIA 7581-U

1. PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM REMAINS AN ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT ITEM IN OUR PUBLIC AFFAIRS BASKET. IN A COUNTRY LIKE THIS ONE, WHERE POLICY-MAKERS AND IMPLEMENTERS ALIKE LABOR UNDER THE DISADVANTAGE OF BEING SUBJECTED TO SO MUCH PROPAGANDA AND IDEOLOGICALLY UNOBJECTIVE INFORMATION THAT THEY ARE IN REAL DANGER OF LOSING THEIR PERSPECTIVE, POC FILLS A DEEPLY FELT NEED (DEEPLY FELT NOT BY THEM, BUT BY US). IF IT DOESN'T CARRY MATERIAL CALCULATED TO GARNER THE APPLAUSE OF THE ELITE AUDIENCE WHICH RECEIVES IT, IT AT LEAST GETS THEIR ATTENTION AND GIVES THEM A CORRECTIVE LENS TO LOOK AT GENUINE ISSUES, UNBECLOUDED BY IDEOLOGICAL JARGON OR SELF-SERVING INTERPRETATIONS. IT PROVIDES AN OBJECTIVE LOOK, ON AN INTELLECTUAL LEVEL WELL SUITED TO ITS AUDIENCE, AS A BALANCE TO LOCAL DOGMA AND SOVIET PROPAGANDA. FURTHERMORE, IT PROVIDES A SOURCE OF INTERPRETATION AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORK OF WESTERN SCHOLARS AND REFLECTS MUCH OF THE BEST

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SCHOLARLY MATERIAL PRESENTLY AVAILABLE ON CURRENT TOPICS
OF VITAL INTEREST TO EAST AND WEST.

2. "THE NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION" IN THE SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER ISSUE IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF A HIGHLY-QUALIFIED WESTERN EXPERT TAKING A LOOK AT A MAJOR SOVIET DOCUMENT AND, FREE OF POLEMICS OR IDEOLOGICAL CANT, PROVIDING AN INTERPRETATION, BOTH OF

THE DOCUMENT ITSELF AND EVENTS SURROUNDING IT. THE ARTICLE ON MOSCOW'S JAPANESE POLICY WAS A SCHOLARLY AND THOUGHTFUL WORK BY AN ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERT IN THE FIELD WHICH COULD NOT FAIL TO APPEAL, AND PERHPAS ENLIGHTEN, ESPECIALLY IN EASTERN EUROPE.

3. "COMPLEXITIES OF CUBAN FOREIGN POLICY" WAS ESPECIALLY TIMELY, AND PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE FOR YUGOSLAV READERS. THE YUGOSLAVS ARE CO-MEMBERS IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT WITH THE CUBANS, AND HAVE, IT SEEMS, HAD THEIR OWN PROBLEMS IN INTERPRETING AND RATIONALIZING SOME OF CUBA'S ACTIONS, ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA. THE ARTICLE WAS WELL CALCULATED TO AID THEM IN THEIR THINKING. "ALBANIA IN THE 70'S" PROVIDED A FASCINATING INTERPRETIVE REVIEW OF ALBANIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA OVER A VERY CRUCIAL PERIOD, AND A WELCOME "OUTSIDE" CONTRIBUTION TO THE STORE OF RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT A NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR.

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4. THE BOOK REVIEWS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS THE ARTICLES, AT LEAST IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. THEY WIDEN THE INTELLECTUAL WINDOW TO WESTERN SCHOLARSHIP, AND ENRICH THE RESOURCE BASE AVAILABLE TO SERIOUS THINKERS ON THE SUBJECTS COVERED. THE REVIEW OF DJILAS' BOOKS WAS UNDOUBTEDLY UNPALATABLE TO SOME READERS HERE, BUT PROBABLY WELCOMED BY OTHERS. IN ANY CASE, THE BOOK REVIEWS IN GENERAL FORM AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE ENTIRE PACKAGE.

5. POC IS A MOST VALUABLE TOOL, A SCALPEL RATHER THAN A

CLEAVER, AND WE CONSIDER IT OF SUCH A UNIQUE ACTIVITY AND QUALITY THAT, IF IT WERE ONLY HALF AS GOOD AS IT IS, IT WOULD STILL PROVIDE AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT IN OUR TOTAL EFFORT. AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER ALSO CONSIDERS IT TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT AID IN THE WHOLE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION. WHILE HE HAS FELT THAT SOME ARTICLES WERE TOO ESOTERIC FOR HIS PERSONAL TASTE, HE RECOGNIZES THE SELECTIVE, SPECIALIZED AUDIENCE FOR WHICH POC IS INTENDED. CLOSE REVIEW OF OUR ARS OCCASIONED BY RECEIPT OF REFTEL CONFIRMED THAT POC IS REACHING ITS INTENDED AUDIENCES. THE APPROXIMATELY TWO HUNDRED COPIES WE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISTRIBUTE HERE ARE RECEIVED BY A CROSS SECTION OF READERS AS DESCRIBED IN THE PRECEPTS, WITH AN ESPECIALLY GOOD GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD AMONG GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA, BUT RATHER LIGHT ON MILITARY. OUR REGULAR REVIEW SYTEM WILL ENSURE THAT OUR MAILING LIST REMAINS CURRENT. POC'S IMPACT IS, OF COURSE, LESS EASY TO ASSESS BUT WE HAVE HAD ENOUGH FEEDBACK TO CONVINCE US OF THE HIGH REGARD IN WHICH IT IS HELD IN YUGOSLAV POLITICAL/INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES.

6. WHILE THE INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF CHINA, THE USSR AND RELATED STATES WILL NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO BE IMPORTANT, WE HOPE THAT ADDITIONAL FOCUS WILL BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE "EUROCOMMUNISM" PHENOMENON. MUCH LESS THOUGHTFUL WORK IS AVAILABLE ON THIS SUBJECT THAN ON SOME OTHERS AND IT WOULD BE A WELCOME AREA FOR ATTENTION IN COMING ISSUES. FURTHER, DISSENTING OPINIONS ON ANY TOPIC, JUXTAPOSED IN A SINGLE ISSUE MIGHT BE INTERESTING, BOTH FOR THEIR CONTENT AND FOR THE INTELLECTUAL VIGOR THEY REPRESENT. EVEN WITHIN THE RANKS OF HONEST SCHOLARSHIP THERE IS ROOM FOR DIFFERENCES AND DEBATE, AT LEAST IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD.
CATHERMAN

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